



University of Hawaii at Manoa

Environmental Center
Crawford 317 • 2550 Campus Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
Telephone (808) 948-7361

RL:0846

SB 2536
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO PURCHASE LAND
AND ESTABLISH A MARINE RESEARCH FIELD STATION
AT PAUAKO BEACH, HAWAII

Statement for
Senate Committee on
Higher Education
Public Hearing - January 30, 1990

By
Jacquelin Miller, Environmental Center
Joseph Halbig, UH at Hilo
Richard Brock, Sea Grant College Program
Philip Helfrich, Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology

SB 2536 would appropriate funds for the establishment of a Marine Research Field Station at Puako Beach, Hawaii.

Our statement on this bill does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

As population pressures on the coastal resources continue to mount, it becomes ever more important to protect those coastal habitats that have unique or special qualities for research and education. The Puako reef area is one such area. Puako Beach reef is a nearly pristine, highly developed coral reef ecosystem. It represents a relatively protected, low energy, highly diversified marine habitat. This diversification of habitat in turn leads to a highly diverse ecological system with a wide selection of reef species including such special occupants as green sea turtles. Green turtles, an endangered species, are known to rest just outside the Marine Life Conservation zone at Puako. The proposed marine research station will certainly afford an excellent base from which to carry on both research and educational programs on the marine coastal environments. The establishment of the station will provide a focus and location for marine related academic programs in West Hawaii and facilitate long term baseline studies and educational programs on a coastal area currently undergoing rapid economic development.